

Saturday, October 3

Second Day

pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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### President Hugh B. Brown

The last two speakers were Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the

Twelve, and Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson, Assistant to the Twelve.

The Choir will now sing, "How Excellent Thy Name," after which there will be a short organ interlude, and then we shall be glad to hear from Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve, who is presently serving as president of the European Mission.

### ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

Some years ago President Joseph F. Smith, a prophet of the Lord, warned that "There are at least three dangers that threaten the Church within. . . ." (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 312.) He also counseled the Authorities of the Church to warn the people unceasingly against them.

These dangers are:

Flattery of prominent men in the world,

False educational ideas,

Sexual impurity.

I should like to comment briefly on these three dangers.

#### Flattery

First, the flattery of prominent men in the world:

The Master warned, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" (Luke 6:26.)

As Latter-day Saints we have been driven, mobbed, misunderstood, and maligned. We have been a peculiar people. Now we are faced with world applause. It has been a welcome change, but can we stand acceptance? Can we meet the danger of applause? In the hour of a man's success applause can be his greatest danger.

There is, of course, nothing wrong with being honored by men, if one is being honored for a good thing, if one comes to these honors through righteous living, and if, while holding these honors, one lives honorably. One should strive to have wide influence for good.

However, virtue is not the only basis for being singled out and promoted. As the world gets more wicked, a possible way to attain worldly success may be to join the wicked. The time is fast ap-

proaching when it will require great courage for Latter-day Saints to stand up for their peculiar standards and doctrine—all of their doctrine, including the more weighty principles such as the principle of freedom. Opposition to this weighty principle of freedom caused many of our brothers and sisters in the pre-existence to lose their first estate in the war in heaven.

We are far removed from the days of our forefathers who were persecuted for their peculiar beliefs. Some of us seem to want to share their reward but are oftentimes afraid to stand up for principles that are controversial in our generation. We need not solicit persecution, but neither should we remain silent in the presence of overwhelming evils, for this makes cowards of men. We should not go out of the path of duty to pick up a cross there is no need to bear, but neither should we sidestep a cross that clearly lies within the path of duty.

We are in the world, and I fear some of us are getting too much like the world. Rather than continue a peculiar people, some are priding themselves on how much they are like everybody else, when the world is getting more wicked. The Lord, as he prayed for his Apostles, said, ". . . the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14.) As Latter-day Saints, we too have been called out of the world.

Some things are changeless—priceless. We must anchor ourselves to the eternal verities of life, for life is eternal. The honors of men more often than not are fleeting. Anxious to run after the honors of office or succumb to the pressures of public glamor and worldly acclaim,

some of us are no longer willing to stand up for all the principles of the gospel. We seek to justify our unrighteousness by claiming that if only we can get title or position, then think of the good we can do. Hence we lose our salvation en route to those honors. We sometimes look among our numbers to find one to whom we can point who agrees with us, so we can have company to justify our apostasy. We rationalize by saying that some day the church doctrine will catch up with our way of thinking.

Seeking the applause of the world, we like to be honored by the men the world honors. But therein lies real danger, for oftentimes, in order to receive those honors, we must join forces with and follow those same devilish influences and policies which brought some of those men to positions of prominence.

More and more the honors of this world are being promoted by the wicked for the wicked. We see this in publicity and awards that are given to movies, literature, art, journalism, etc. We see in our own newspapers widely read columnists carried who advocate one-world socialism, who have been consistently caught in falsehoods, and who continually parrot the communist line. Less and less we see the virtuous rewarded by the world, and when they are, oftentimes it almost seems to be done insidiously in order to get us to swallow the many evils for which the wicked are even more profusely honored.

Yes, President Joseph F. Smith was right. Today we are being plagued within by the flattery of prominent men in the world.

### False Educational Ideas

Second, *false educational ideas*:

During the past several years many of our institutions of learning have been turning out an increasing number of students schooled in amorality, relativity, and atheism—students divested of a belief in God, without fixed moral principles or an understanding of our constitutional republic and our capitalistic, free enterprise economic system. This follows a pattern which was established years ago at some of our key colleges that produced many of the teachers and leaders in the educational field across the country today.

The fruits of this kind of teaching have been tragic, not only to the souls of the individuals involved but also to the parents and even to our country. We saw these tragic fruits with some of our boys in Korea.

When a survey was recently made among students asking which they would prefer, nuclear war or surrender to the communists, those campuses scored highest for surrender who had been most permeated by these cowardly teachings of false economic principles, atheism, and amorality. On one very liberal college campus over 90 percent favored surrender. Other surveys on moral standards are equally alarming. More disturbing is the fact that the more college courses the students take on these campuses, the worse their thinking seems to become. Freshmen who have just left home or work do not seem as fully permeated with the brainwashing as the seniors.

Some alumni of various schools have expressed concern. One alumnus from Yale wrote a book a few years ago entitled *God and Man at Yale*. Another group (which includes Teddy Roosevelt's hero son Archibald) from Harvard University established the Veritas Foundation and wrote a book, *Keynes at Harvard*, explaining the degree to which the destructive Fabian economic philosophy has permeated educational institutions and government. Concerned educators have begun to write books. Professor E. Merrill Root authored *Collectivism on the Campus and Brainwashing in the High Schools*. Dr. Max Rafferty, now state superintendent of schools in California, wrote *Suffer Little Children and What They Are Doing to Your Children*.

In the school history textbooks of recent years, some of the greatest phrases in American history have been dropped. *This Week Magazine* recently surveyed history books issued before 1920 and since 1920. Patrick Henry's famous words, "Give me liberty or give me death," appeared in twelve out of the fourteen earlier texts, but in only two out of the forty-five recent texts. Perhaps this might help explain the percentage of students who are willing to surrender to communism.

The whole process can be quite insidious. Young people know that the

best jobs are available to college graduates. They want to do well at school. When exam time comes, they must give back to the teacher what the teacher wants. Now under the guise of academic freedom—which some apparently feel is freedom to destroy freedom—some teachers reserve to themselves the privilege of teaching error, destroying faith in God, debunking morality, and depreciating our free economic system. If questions reflecting the teacher's false teachings appear on the exam, how will the student answer who believes in God and morality and our Constitution? One student put on his exam paper what he knew the professor wanted to see, but then the student added a little p.s. which said, "Dear Professor So and So: I just want you to know I don't believe one word of what I just wrote above."

These kinds of professors are not concerned about the truth or even giving both sides of a question that only has one right answer. They weight the scales on the side of falsehood. If they can see there is another side, it usually gets but passing and belittling reference. To give the impression that they are objective, these professors often invite someone to present a different point of view in one lecture, while the professor spends the whole semester pointing out the other side.

Now truth, if given as much time and emphasis as error, will invariably prove itself. And if our young students could have as much time studying the truth as they and some of their professors have had time studying error, then there would be no question of the outcome. The problem arises when under the pressure of a heavy course of study and the necessity of parroting back what certain professors have said, the student does not have the time or take the time to learn the truth. If he does not learn the truth, some day he will suffer the consequences. Many an honest student, after graduation, has had to do some unlearning and then fresh learning of basic principles which never change and which he should have been taught initially.

Now these false educational ideas are prevalent in the world, and we have not entirely escaped them among teachers in our own system. There are a few

teachers within the Church who while courting apostasy still want to remain members in the Church, for being members makes them more effective in misleading the Saints. But their day of judgment is coming, and when it does come, for some of them it would have been better, as the Savior said, that a millstone had been put around their necks and they had drowned in the depths of the sea, than to have led away any of the youth of the Church.

The Lord has stated that his Church will never again be taken from the earth because of apostasy. But he has also stated that some members of his Church will fall away. There has been individual apostasy in the past, it is going on now, and there will be an even increasing amount in the future. While we cannot save all the flock from being deceived, we should, without compromising our doctrine, strive to save as many as we can. For as President Clark said, "We are in the midst of the greatest exhibition of propoganda that the world has ever seen . . ."

Parents, stay close to your children; you cannot delegate your responsibility to the educators no matter how competent they may be. Parents have a duty to train their children, to talk over their problems with them, to discuss what they are learning at school. And it is neither wise nor safe, as President Stephen L Richards stated, to leave the determination of our educational system and policies exclusively to the professional educators.

Students, study the writings of the prophets. Fortunately, the consistent position taken over the years by the prophets of the Church on vital issues facing this nation have recently been compiled in an excellent book entitled *Prophets, Principles and National Survival* [by Jerreld L. Newquist].

Students, pray for inspiration and knowledge. Counsel with your parents. Let Sunday be the day to fill up your spiritual batteries for the week by reading good church books, particularly the Book of Mormon. Take time to meditate. Don't let the philosophies and falsehoods of men throw you. Hold on to the iron rod. Learn to sift. Learn to discern error through the promptings of the Spirit and your study of the truth.

Yes, false educational ideas are a serious threat today.

### Immorality

#### Third, *sexual immorality*:

Sexual immorality is a viper that is striking not only in the world, but in the Church today. Not to admit it is to be dangerously complacent or is like putting one's head in the sand. In the category of crimes, only murder and denying the Holy Ghost come ahead of illicit sexual relations, which we call fornication when it involves an unmarried person, or the graver sin of adultery when it involves one who is married. I know the laws of the land do not consider unchastity as serious as God does, nor punish as severely as God does, but that does not change its abominableness. In the eyes of God there is but one moral standard for men and women. In the eyes of God chastity will never be out of date.

The natural desire for men and women to be together is from God. But such association is bounded by his laws. Those things properly reserved for marriage, when taken within the bonds of marriage, are right and pleasing before God and fulfil the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth. But those same things when taken outside the bonds of marriage are a curse.

No sin is causing the loss of the Spirit of the Lord among our people more today than sexual promiscuity. It is causing our people to stumble, damning their growth, darkening their spiritual powers, and making them subject to other sins.

Recently, a young man commented that if he quit reading books, watching TV, seeing movies, reading newspapers and magazines, and going to school, there was a chance he might live a clean life. And this explains, in large part, the extent to which this insidious evil has spread, for the world treats this sin flippantly. These evil forces build up your lust and then fail to tell of the tragic consequences. In so many movies the hero is permitted to get away with crime so long as he can joke about it, or explain he was powerless to do anything, or else at the close of the movie show forth one minimal virtue that is supposed to cover over the grossest of

sin. Many of our prominent national magazines pander to the baser side, but then try to cover for themselves by including other articles, too.

So garbled in values have our morals become that some youth would not dare touch a cigaret but freely engage in petting. Both are wrong, but one is infinitely more serious than the other.

Parents should give their children specific instructions on chastity at an early age, both for their physical and moral protection. Years ago President David O. McKay, God bless him, read a statement written by Mrs. Wesley to her famous son John. I commend it to you as a basis for judgment pertaining to the matter of chastity. "Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure? Take this rule: Now note, whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, takes off your relish for spiritual things, whatever increases the authority of the body over the mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may seem in itself."

### Avoid Pitfalls of Immorality

May I suggest some steps to avoid the pitfalls of immorality:

(1) Avoid late hours and weariness. The Lord said retire to your bed early (D&C 88:124), and there are good reasons for that. Some of the worst sins are committed after midnight by tired heads. Officers in the wards and stakes, branches and missions should not keep our people, especially our youth, up late at night even for wholesome recreation.

(2) Keep your dress modest. Short skirts are not pleasing to the Lord, but modesty is. Girls, do not be an enticement for your downfall because of your immodest and tight-fitting clothes.

(3) Have good associates or don't associate at all. Be careful in the selection of your friends. If in the presence of certain persons you are lifted to nobler heights, you are in good company. But if your friends or associates encourage base thoughts, then you had best leave them.

(4) Avoid necking and petting like a plague, for necking and petting is the concession which precedes the complete loss of virtue.

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(5) Have a good physical outlet of some sport or exercise. Overcome evil with good. You can overcome many evil inclinations through good physical exertion and healthful activities. A healthy soul, free of the body-and-spirit-dulling influences of alcohol and tobacco, is in better condition to overthrow the devil.

(6) Think clean thoughts. Those who think clean thoughts do not do dirty deeds. You are not only responsible before God for your acts but also for controlling your thoughts. So live that you would not blush with shame if your thoughts and acts could be flashed on a screen in your church. The old adage is still true that you sow thoughts and you reap acts, you sow acts and you reap habits, you sow habits and you reap a character, and your character determines your eternal destiny. "As a man thinketh, so is he." (See Prov. 23:7.)

(7) Pray. There is no temptation placed before you which you cannot shun. Do not allow yourself to get in positions where it is easy to fall. Listen to the promptings of the Spirit. If you are engaged in things where you do not feel you can pray and ask the Lord's blessings on what you are doing, then you are engaged in the wrong kind of activity.

Yes—avoid late hours; dress modestly; seek good associates; avoid necking and petting; have a good physical outlet; think good thoughts; pray.

May the Lord bless us as a people. We have taken upon us sacred covenants. We must be faithful. We are in the world, it is true, but we must not partake of the evils of the world. Let us be ever on guard against the flattery of

prominent men in the world, false educational ideas, and sexual impurity, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Hugh B. Brown

Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve has given the concluding address.

We shall conclude this session by the Tabernacle Choir singing "Praise Ye The Lord." Following the singing the benediction will be pronounced by Elder Reed H. Beckstead, president of the Midvale Stake, and this Conference will be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

We again express appreciation for the cooperation of the owners and managers of the many television and radio stations in offering their facilities as a public service to make the proceedings of this Conference available to millions throughout North and South America, Europe, Africa, and many other areas of the world.

We are grateful, too, to those who are joining with us on television and radio. May God bless them that the spirit of this occasion will enlighten their minds and bring peace and comfort to their souls.

We appreciate the attendance here of educators, government officials, church officials, many of our service men, and others who are in attendance.

The Choir will now sing "Praise Ye The Lord."

(Postlude singing by Choir: "Abide With Me.")

## SECOND DAY

### AFTERNOON MEETING

#### President N. Eldon Tanner

Again, our President has asked that I conduct this session of our Conference. He expresses his regret that his doctors feel he should not attend. If it were left to him there is no doubt but what he would be here. He sends his blessings and greetings to you again and prays

that the blessings of the Spirit of the Lord will attend us, and he has expressed his gratitude with the way the Conference has been conducted, the fine talks that have been given and the lovely music that has been rendered, the prayers that have been offered.

For the information of those who are tuned in by radio and television we are